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10 January 1952

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

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1. [ ] of ID/P came to see me at suggestion of Lofty Becker with respect to the problem of Soviet, U. S. and world reaction to real or fictional exposure of U. S. espionage cases. Some of the objectives of such a study would be to determine:

- a. What attitude the President, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense should take in cases of Soviet accusation; should they know what are the facts or can they deny governmental connection better without facts?
- b. What are the effects on existing operations?
- c. What effect is there on operational planning?
- d. What attitude do we want the United States public to have?

2. In response to their inquiry as to what I thought of this I suggested as follows:

- a. This job be pinned on an individual in ID/P or O/GO and not on a committee.
- b. That that individual carefully rack up with some precision the intelligence questions that need to be answered and that then the Office which has the capability be asked to produce the necessary information.\* Thus:

(1) An immediate request could be levied on the divisions of O/GO to indicate which of their cases have been blown.

(2) In certain major and recent cases made public, such as the [ ]/CI could be asked to cull their information all-sources (including [ ] reports) on Soviet actions and reactions.

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(3) The State Department Public Affairs Office to be asked through R for the clipping file on U. S. editorial, radio, and general press reaction on certain specific cases of interest.

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\* When [ ] support unit in SO is organized this kind of bringing together of intelligence would normally fall in line.

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(4) OIR-State be requested to make available United Nations reactions on certain specific cases of interest.

(5) OOI on a continuing basis could be asked to keep a constant alert for information bearing upon either past or new Russian allegations of espionage incidents.

c. When the basic materials have been assembled O/NE may be able to give assistance in the event it points to a useful estimate of Russian intentions. Chet Hansen could, I think, make a contribution of the U. S. public attitude aspects of the problem.

3. This project might be mentioned by DD/P or O/SO in the Director's Staff Conference for the information of the Staff.

4. Two problems mentioned in the memorandum I read ~~and~~ separable from the foregoing:

a. Within the framework of NSC/D 5 who is doing what in espionage (I understand [ ] of SO is negotiating with Defense agencies on this); and

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b. Can we get a commitment from the other agencies to inform SO when an operation of the other agencies is blown?

These problems SO is already on the way to handling but by and large do not concern the intelligence officer.

JAMES O. REBER  
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